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News Room

Archives 2001
October 4, 2001
Neurochem and SELECT Therapeutics Collaborate on Alzheimer's Vaccine
New Amyloid-Based Vaccine Approach to Prevent Dementia

Neurochem Inc. (TSX : NRM) and SELECT Therapeutics, Inc. (AMEX: XZL) today announced the initiation of a collaboration program to advance a novel vaccine intended to prevent the development and the progression of Alzheimer's Disease. The vaccine will target the prevention of an accumulation of beta-amyloid, a protein that constitutes a major part of plaques in the brain of Alzheimer's patients. The successful outcome of this joint effort should enable an early therapeutic intervention for patients with this widespread and debilitating disease.

"This collaboration provides Neurochem with access to a cutting-edge technology for the creation of vaccines with therapeutic potential. We believe that our expertise based on over 20 years of research on Alzheimer's Disease-related mechanisms, coupled with SELECT's Verovax™ technology will allow Neurochem to expand its amyloid-targeting core technology platform to the development of new therapeutic products for Alzheimer's Disease," said Dr. Louis R. Lamontagne, President and CEO of Neurochem.

"This collaboration with Neurochem strengthens SELECT's core biopharmaceutical focus by expanding the number of targets in our Verovax™ product development portfolio. The agreement highlights the distinctive breadth and strength of SELECT's Verovax™ technology in rapidly moving forward a variety of vaccine candidates against multiple targets," said Robert Bender, Chairman of SELECT Therapeutics Corp.

Under the terms of the agreement, Neurochem will provide AD antigens from its proprietary library. SELECT will use its Verovax™ technology to target Alzheimer's antigens isolated by Neurochem directly to dendritic cells, the cells of the immune system which direct and control antibody production and cellular immunity. The goal for this innovative vaccine will be to induce a protective immune response against the development of amyloidosis in Alzheimer's Disease.

About Beta-Amyloid Vaccines as Emerging Anti-Alzheimer's Therapeutics

The targets described in the agreement between Neurochem and SELECT Therapeutics are based on the structure of a protein known as beta-amyloid. This protein is attracting increasing interest for its emerging role as a component of the plaques which form in the brains of patients with Alzheimer's disease and a chief culprit in the death of surrounding neuronal cells. Several recent reports in leading scientific journals have suggested that antibodies to beta amyloid in transgenic animals expressing the protein can prevent or reduce the formation of plaques in the brain and the deterioration of their cognitive function. The development of effective vaccines which reduce beta-amyloid levels in the brain may offer a unique opportunity to target a basic cause of the associated dementia.

Alzheimer's Disease is the most common cause of dementia in the aging population, and affects approximately 4 million people in the U.S. alone. In its early stages, the disease causes only minor incidences of memory loss or forgetfulness, but as it progresses, the symptoms multiply and intensify, causing the deterioration of both cognitive and motor functioning. Ongoing research on the underlying mechanisms of the disease has led to the development of therapeutics that will eventually slow or prevent the effects of the disease process.

About Neurochem

Neurochem is a leader in the development of novel, proprietary compounds that inhibit the formation, deposition and toxic effects of amyloid fibrils within the body. Neurochem's innovative core technology consists of the design and synthesis of compounds that mimic the properties of sulphated glycosaminoglycans' or GAGs, complex carbohydrates that promote the amyloid fibril formation that is characteristic of Alzheimer's Disease. Neurochem's synthetic compounds compete with the naturally occurring GAGs to interfere with the formation and deposition of amyloid aggregates.

Neurochem's research team has been working with international amyloid experts on the development of therapeutic cures to amyloid-related diseases, including Alzheimer's Disease, Secondary Amyloidosis, Diabetes Type II and Hemorrhagic Stroke due to Cerebral Amyloid Angiopathy (CAA). Neurochem has advanced three drug candidates to clinical trials: Alzhemed™ for Alzheimer's Disease, Fibrillex™ for Secondary Amyloidosis and Cerebril™ for Hemorrhagic Stroke due to CAA. At present, the Company employs over 73 people and is located in Saint-Laurent, Canada (www.neurochem.com).

About SELECT Therapeutics, Inc.

SELECT Therapeutics, Inc. (AMEX: XZL) and its joint venture with Cytomatrix, LLC, Cell Science Therapeutics, Inc. (CST), are

pioneering the clinical development of novel, cell-based therapeutic products employing propriety tissue engineering, cell growth, and cell targeting technologies. In particular, the Company, in collaboration with the "Institut Curie" in Paris, is developing a novel vaccine technology, known as Verovax™, which is based on the use of a proprietary targeting agent, VT-B to deliver specific peptides to dendritic cells. The peptide antigen is then directed via retrograde transport into the antigen-processing pathway of these cells, where it is metabolized and presented on the cell surface in a way which activates the immune system. The Company expects that, compared to current vaccine technologies, significantly more robust immune responses will be developed using vaccines employing Verovax™. SELECT Therapeutics has licensed the underlying technology of Verovax™ exclusively from the "Institut Curie". For further information on SELECT Therapeutics, Inc., please visit our recently updated website at: www.selecttherapeutics.com. The Company can also be reached at its headquarters in Woburn, MA, USA at (781) 939-0995.

All of the statements contained in this news release, other than statements of fact which are independently verifiable at the date hereof, are forward-looking statements. Such statements, based as they are on the current expectations of management, inherently involve numerous risks and uncertainties, known and unknown. Some examples of known risks are: the impact of general economic conditions, general conditions in the pharmaceutical industry, changes in the regulatory environment in the jurisdictions in which Neurochem does business, stock market volatility, fluctuations in costs, and changes to the competitive environment due to consolidation or otherwise. Consequently, actual future results may differ materially from the anticipated results expressed in the forward-looking statements.

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